

Assistive Technology Program for Farmers with Disabilities: State and Regional AgrAbility Projects

FY 2003 Request for Applications – Explanatory Notes

Includes:

- 1. One page overview of the program*
- 2. Summary of Changes for FY 2003*
- 3. Pertinent Topic Index for FY 2003 RFA*

LETTER OF INTENT DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 20, 2002

APPLICATION DEADLINE: DECEMBER 4, 2002

Note: Please disregard information provided in this document that appears to conflict with instructions provided in the 2003 AgrAbility Request for Applications document.
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U.S. Department of Agriculture



Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service

One Page Overview of the Program:

Assistive Technology Program for Farmers with Disabilities: State and Regional AgrAbility Projects

Who May Apply?	Extension Directors and Administrators of 1862 and 1890 Land-Grant Universities (or their designees). Applicants should subcontract with at least one private, non-profit disability organization. Both new and continuation applicants should respond.
How Much Money is Available?	The program anticipates granting approximately \$3.5 million in fiscal year (FY) 2003. The program anticipates funding two (2) new projects. Applicants may request up to \$150,000 for FY 2003 expenditures. New applicants may propose projects up to four years in length for a total of \$600,000. Twenty-one (21) projects may request continuation funding.
What is AgrAbility?	AgrAbility takes several approaches to encouraging farmers or farm workers with disabilities to remain employed in production agriculture. Grantees seek out potential clientele. Grantees provide technological advice to and advocate on behalf of these farmers. Grantees educate service providers in health care and farm support industries about the means through which these farmers can remain employed in production agriculture. Grantees facilitate peer networks to help these farmers help themselves and each other. Grantees evaluate these activities and report back to CSREES. As an extension program, AgrAbility can not fund assistive technology devices or farmstead modifications for individuals.
When are the Due Dates?	CSREES must receive letters of intent from new applicants by 5:00 PM EST on November 20, 2002 and all applications before 5:00 PM EST on December 4, 2002.
Where can I get a copy of the RFA?	http://www.reeusda.gov/1700/funding/rfaatpfd.htm or
Who can help me?	Mr. Ivan Graff, Program Specialist USDA / CSREES / PAS / PET Stop 2220; Room 3414 1400 Independence Ave. SW Washington, DC 20250-2220 Telephone: (202) 401-6825 Facsimile: (202) 401-5179 Email: igraff@reeusda.gov

Summary of Changes for FY 2003:

Changes That Affect All Applicants

1. *Document title* - Where once we issued “Guidance” or “Guidelines,” the document is now a Request for Applications (RFA) and the documents submitted to CSREES form an application and not a proposal.
2. *Number of RFA Documents* – Where once we issued separate instructions for new projects (projects not funded during the previous fiscal year, including resubmitted applications) and continuing projects (projects that did receive funding during the previous fiscal year), all applicants will use the same set of instructions. See the Pertinent Topic Index in this document for specific guidance.
3. *National AgrAbility Project (NAP)* – The RFA describes the NAP’s relationship with state and regional projects and encourages applicants to learn more about the NAP. See I.B. on page 5.
4. *Reporting and Outputs* – Where once included in the section guiding application forms completion, reporting and output instructions now appear in IV.C.1 & 2. The Program Office now formally requests that the NAP receive a portion of the outputs required by CSREES and that AgrAbility projects cooperate with the NAP’s Information Collection System efforts.
5. *Hand-Delivery Address* – Send Proposals to Room 1420. Irradiation of U.S. Postal mail addressed to CSREES slows delivery unpredictably. The Program Office encourages applicants to consider using a courier to deliver applications.

Changes That Affect New Applicants Only

1. *Letter of Intent (to Apply)* – This letter does not obligate potential applicants, but does afford the Program Office sufficient prior notice to compile an appropriate peer review panel in advance of the application deadline all in effort to grant awards faster. See Part III.C.2 on page 21 for details.
2. *Project Description* – Although previous guidance documents did not use this title for a significant section of the application’s narrative, new applications have historically included this information under headings “Project Justification” and “Work Plan.” In addition applicants will need to delineate project personnel’s responsibilities, outline evaluation procedures, and provide a project schedule which should include/depict reporting events. See pages 13-15.

Changes That Affect **Continuing** Applicants Only

1. *Project Description and Progress Report* – Although previous guidance documents did not use this title for a significant section of the application’s narrative, new applications have historically included this information under headings “Justification for Changes” and “Work Plan.” In addition applicants will need to detail changes in project personnel and responsibilities, outline evaluation procedures changes, and provide a revised project schedule which should include/depict reporting events. The most important change, really addition, concerns the Project Progress Report element of this section. See pages 15-16.
2. *Project Schedule* – Clarification: Changes in the current project year may impact future project years. If a continuing project recognizes such an impending cascade, present a schedule that extends past all anticipated activity shifts. See page 16.
3. *Matching Documentation* – Once included with “Letters of Support” and never before required in continuation applications, please review III.B.12.c. on pages 18-19. If commitments have not changed since the original competitive application gained funding, you may reproduce those “Letters of Support” that detail matching funds for the continuation proposal. If the Letters, do not discuss funding, applicants will need to obtain appropriate documentation.

Pertinent Topic Index for FY 2003:

Please Note: Some terms below do not actually appear in the RFA but are synonymous with other terms that do.

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